



THEOSOPHY IN ACTION

Quarterly Official Organ of The Theosophical Society in Europe—Federation of National Societies

CHAIRMAN AND EDITOR—Mrs. Madeleine Leslie-Smith, 2 Tekels Park, Camberley, Surrey, England.

ASSISTANT EDITOR—Mrs. Greta Eedle, 35 Stile Hall Gardens, London, W4 3BS, England.

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT—

c/o 50 Gloucester Place, London, W.1, England.

The Work Ahead for Theosophists

Extracts from the Inaugural Address given by our late President, Mr. C. Jinarajadasa on February 17th, 1946

... If I have the nature of God within me, if somewhere in the recesses of my heart and mind, I can see a Divine Light shining within me, and not external to me when I am engaged in religious worship under the guidance of priestly leaders and teachers, then it follows that Divine Happiness also resides within me. I am then not only 'the Way, the Truth and the Life', I am also the fount of Happiness. Convince men that the fount of Happiness is within themselves, then little by little the struggle for life diminishes. What does it matter that I am poor, that I am ailing, that I am oppressed, if I have within me the key to open the Treasure House of Happiness? In daily life then, it is not what I earn that matters, not what I own which is the standard of worth; but that I am pure and unsullied by greed, charitable in heart and mind to all, and radiating friendship to bird, beast, tree, shrub and flower.

It is not an easy task to discover, in the words of St. Paul, 'the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory'. It is to this task we are called. Divine Truth, Divine Beauty, Divine Tenderness, and every factor of hope and glory that is conveyed by the one word Mukti, or Nirvana, or Salvation, all these reside in ourselves. Could only men be aware of them, the search for their realisation will be found as the only way to Happiness. We theosophists have to instruct mankind as to this new way...

To create intense happiness from within our souls, such a happiness as will compensate us for the hardships of life—that is the lesson that we theosophists have to learn, and to teach. The magic phrase, 'Open Sesame', lies in that one word, Create. Even a child knows its secret; see how busy he is with his mud or sand, or the puddle in the gutter; we say he is playing. No, he is creating; he is reaching out into the recesses of being, and rejoicing that he can do something that gives him joy. So too, we can all learn to create. Every poet creates, for the word means one who fashions; every artist is as a crucible into which is poured the mingled dross of life's transient happiness and miseries, and he melts and transmutes them in the fire of his imagination, and bodies forth a work of art that for a while is not alone his own Mukti or Salvation, but makes young men see visions and old men dream dreams of their eternal joy and serenity.

It was said by Solomon about the Wisdom: 'Sweetly doth she order all things.' Wisdom is a power. It is for this reason that Theosophy is not an intellectual philosophy, but a generating station of power. Each theosophical lodge should become a power-plant generating ideas, especially the ideas which the world needs today to lessen the struggle for existence. Take for instance, the most powerful and dynamic idea which we theosophists have as our 'marching orders'—the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity. Only imagine a world peopled in the majority with men and women who not only believe but have discovered the joys inherent in that principle; would a man or woman then care to ask to what race another belongs, to what God he or she bends the knee? The one joyous truth which the stranger brings with him is then: 'You are my brother, I am your brother'.

How could wars ever arise in such a civilisation? How could poverty exist as contrasted with callous luxury? These human evils, the source of the struggle for existence, disappear, as the morning mists disappear with the rising of the sun.

Suppose in addition, every theosophist in every theosophical lodge were to say softly to himself as he meets friend or stranger, "THAT art thou, the vision of God that I seek, the goal of Mukti for which I long, art thou." All the theosophical studies then are a mere accompaniment, an elaboration in harmonies, of the glorious chant of Unity which rings throughout the universe linking angel and man, beast and plant, in one joyous embrace.

Imagine too theosophical lodges not only studying the Wisdom in books, but also trying to express what they know in poems and songs; holding study classes not to study 'teachings', but to teach the newcomer the art of creating out of the experiences which he has had in life some glimpses of truth about his own Divine Self, and too about the nature of those fragments of that Divine Self who are the men, the women, and the children around him. The word theosophist then undergoes a change; it signifies not one who belongs to a Society, but one who has learnt how, as did once upon a time the sages in India, to create new hymns of new Vedas, in singing which the world of the angels joins with the world of men; to create statues as did Phidias and Praxiteles in Greece to contemplate which gave the utmost solace to every troubled heart; to paint pictures as did Turner, showing in the colours of the sky the light that never is on land or sea; to create dances in looking at which we gain a far away glimpse of the Cosmic Rhythm in which all creation moves.

Think too of the theosophist as one who notes the outline and tint of every leaf, of every feather, marvelling at the transcendent workmanship of the Demiurgos, the Divine Artificer; as one who gazes at each flower as a window into another land where exist for him adventure after adventure in love and life; think of him supremely as one who looks at the faces of children, each as a sentence with a new message that Goodness, Truth and Beauty are one, and that though God when embodied as man or woman is dazzling in beauty, there is another order of Divine Beauty to dazzle the heart and mind in a child's face.

My Brothers, helped by the Teachers and their teachings of the past, we must create new Wisdoms, new Theosophies, so that we are known not as the professors of a creed, not as the followers of teachers, but as men and women busy, strenuously, but also with the sense of joy, creating new ways of happiness for mankind. Then shall men little by little discover that the Kingdom of Righteousness, the Garden of Happiness, are within their own hearts and minds; then will they cease to clamber and struggle for outer delights; for how then should a man delve into the depths of the earth to find jewels, when in his own hand is the key to the Treasure House of all jewels possible?

It is in these new ways that we who are pledged to the work of the Theosophical Society must work 'to lift a little of the

(Continued on page 4, column 4)

The Original Programme of the Theosophical Society—Some Words on Daily Life

By CORONA TREW

In 1931 Mr. C. Jinarajadasa issued a booklet called *The Original Programme of The Theosophical Society and Preliminary Memorandum of The Esoteric Section* (published, T.P.H., Adyar). The manuscript of this, written in H. P. Blavatsky's handwriting, dated from 1886 and was found in the Archives of the Society at Adyar.

In *The Collected Writings of H. P. Blavatsky* (1886-7), Volume VII, edited by Boris de Zirkoff, and issued in 1950, the material is given in full together with some relevant letters from H.P.B. to W. Q. Judge and A. P. Sinnett.

This document *The Original Programme*, setting out Theosophical principles, was compiled at a time of one of the periodical upheavals within the Society. Mohini Chattjeri, a young Brahmin and pupil of the Masters, had been sent to Europe to help with the dissemination of theosophical teachings, but he had become somewhat disaffected and critical of the administration of the Society. He, together with Arthur Gebhard, a member of a distinguished German Theosophical family, had sent a long letter of criticism of Colonel Olcott's administration, and the memorandum on *The Original Programme* was compiled by H.P.B. in reply to this. The importance of the material for us today lies in the ethical instructions it contains for our conduct and behaviour as Theosophists, particularly some advice on conduct in a letter from one of the Masters of The Wisdom, incorporated within the memorandum.

H.P.B. tells in this document of some advice she and Colonel Olcott received from the Masters for their work in the direction of the Society. "The Founders had to exercise all their influence", she writes, "to oppose selfishness of any kind by insisting upon sincere, fraternal feelings among the members—at least outwardly; working for it to bring about a spirit of unity and harmony, the great diversity of creeds notwithstanding, expecting and demanding from the Fellows, a great mutual toleration and charity for each other's shortcomings; material help in the research of truths in every domain—moral or physical—and even, in daily life". Secondly, the Founders were told that "they had to oppose in the strongest manner possible anything approaching dogmatic faith and fanaticism." This, to include an opposition to any fanatical belief which might arise as to the infallibility of the Masters and, indeed, a dogmatic belief in their existence unless based upon first hand experience.

The memorandum on *The Original Programme* includes the letter from a Master of the Wisdom entitled *Some Words on Daily Life*, and this says "Theosophy must not represent merely a collection of moral verities, a bundle of metaphysical Ethics epitomized in theoretical dissertations. Theosophy must be made practical and has, therefore, to be disencumbered of useless digressions in the sense of desultory orations and fine talk. It has to find objective expression in an all-embracing code of life, thoroughly impregnated with its spirit—the spirit of mutual tolerance, charity and love".

Tolerance will mean that we accord to others the same right to hold beliefs sincerely and to act upon them, as we claim for ourselves. Charity represents a generous and outward flowing sharing of

ourselves and what we have, while brotherly love emanates from the conviction of our essential unity and relatedness with our fellow men and all that lives.

For every theosophist the further advice is given in this letter from a Master of the Wisdom. "Let every theosophist only do his duty, that which he can and ought to do, and very soon the sum of human misery, within and around the areas of every Branch [Lodge] of your Society, will be found visibly diminished. Forget SELF in working for others—and the task will become an easy and a light one for you..." As we look around us today, so many years later, we still seem hardly to have begun on this task.

The letter from the Master in this *Original Programme* document contains much explicit advice for the true theosophist to follow. Summarising some of the points: we shall not blame a brother, but rather turn our attention to our own shortcomings. Neither should we show up our brother's lack of achievement; rather help him in his "arduous walk in life". We should work out clear, unequivocal conceptions of ethical ideals and duties which will best satisfy the deepest altruistic feelings within us. We are enjoined to try to shape our daily lives to express these ideals. This will involve us in strenuous work, but leave no time for selfishness and we should not compare our achievement with what we deem "lack of achievement" in our neighbour or brother for "None is held to weed out a larger plot of ground than his strength and capacity permit him". In our attitude to those who apply to join the Society we should not be too severe for we are "Freeworkers in the Domain of Truth, and as such must leave no obstructions on the paths leading to it".

The letter closes: "the degree of success or failure are the landmarks we [the Adepts] shall have to follow [in giving their help], as they will constitute the barriers placed with your own hands between yourselves and those whom you have asked to be your teachers. The nearer you approach to the goal contemplated—the shorter the distance between the student and the Master."

So, no one of us can answer for another or judge the progress of another, only each in his own heart must answer for himself. "Reward and acknowledgment are in yourself and inseparable from you, as it is your Inner Self alone which can appreciate them at their true degree and value. For each one of you contains within the precincts of his inner tabernacle the Supreme Court—your higher Consciousness."

This supreme judge within, is the ultimate Self—our individual "Ray of the Planetary Spirit"—which in the words of *The Voice of Silence* "burns a steady golden fire, the flame of Prajna (Wisdom) that radiates from Atman."

We are approaching the Centenary of the Society in 1975, when it is said that in the last quarter of the century a further phase of spiritual illumination and assistance will be given to the world. In all the writings of our President we find the stress on the urging of the need for self-change in the members of the Society, telling us that this is the most important work we can each undertake in the world today. Self-culture, purification and sensitization, in the light of spiritual wisdom, will bring a change in the whole quality of living.



THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
IN EUROPE

FEDERATION OF NATIONAL SOCIETIES
Theosophy in Action

SCARES

NEWS IS A PECULIAR PHENOMENON. ONE OF its characteristics is contained in the word itself, for only something new is news. An insignificant incident, if unusual, will qualify; but if repeated will cease to be noticed. Even important items sink to small paragraphs if they are recurring. News also tends to be localized. Major events in other lands are of course reported, as also matters of world concern, but mostly from the angle of home interest. Moreover, a catastrophe affecting 10,000 people in a far country may be dismissed in a few lines, while a column or more is given to some local happening involving very few persons.

All this is not surprising if one is aware that journalists are not trying to write history, not even the history of a day. They are concerned with the stories of the day, and only of the day, mainly for readers who live and work in the same city or country. The words journal and journalist indicate merely diurnal interest, like the French *jour*.

It is clear then that discrimination, detachment and a sense of proportion are needed in judging the value of 'news'. One might say that journalists make the news by the way they present the facts and happenings with which the news deals. This is no disparagement of their integrity; but rather a tribute to their craftsmanship and also a realistic assessment of their function. Such realism is a safeguard against false impressions. The prominence given to 'a good story' may be likened to concentrating on one pearl in a necklace, magnifying it and admiring its beauty, shutting out of consideration entirely its place in the whole string of pearls. Herein lies a danger; for no true idea of the importance of a news item can be had except by seeing it in the setting of context of other affairs or events of the day.

This lack of proper perspective is the cause of many of the scares that seem to come with increasing frequency. Research workers in one field show findings from which it is deduced that mankind will starve in so many years time. Result, a scare, regardless of the fact that perhaps half the world starves now and the other half eats too much. Another group, working along a different line, presently states that new methods can provide ample food for generations to come. Again, someone works out statistically that the world acreage available for livestock cannot support an exploding population. Another scare. Yet certain experimenters in land reclamation claim that a given area will produce vegetarian fare to feed several times the number of people who can be fed from the same area used for supplying meat, and that this would solve the problem of world food production. Then there are the various pollution scares.

These scares are all useful in giving shocks that shake men into some awareness of the folly of selfish or irresponsible ways of living; and as such they are to be welcomed. But, in fact, it is the shock of the journalist's story of the day. We may hope that it will check the greedy exploitation of Nature. But let us not forget Nature's marvellous power of self-healing and the still vast and untapped resources of the earth. The Theosophist may assuage anxiety by realizing the ephemeral quality of news and of the journalist's 'good story', setting these against the background of the evolution of humanity and the varied manifestations of the One Life permeating and sustaining all.

From the Chairman

The Theosophical Order of Service

Inquirers often ask: "What do Theosophists actually do?" It is easy to say that it is not what we do but what we are that is important. And that we hope that what we are affects all the many different activities in the world in which Theosophists are engaged.

But it is harder to be sure that we are making our full contribution to the world in which we live. Self-training and self-improvement are almost valueless unless we give to the world more than the world has given to us.

In the early years of the Society groups of Theosophists undertook pioneer work of relief and education. These have now been taken over by larger organizations with specially trained workers.

Annie Besant founded the T.O.S. in order to help us to give with discrimination and in the most economic way, both in money and effort. It is not economic for the T.O.S. to duplicate work already being done by professionals. We should make our contributions to their work by the help we can give, through the T.O.S., to those organizations in money or activity. In fact many of our members do just that.

What seems to be needed is for the T.O.S. to keep us informed about special needs which have not yet received wide enough recognition, such as research into new sources of protein food, medical research which does not involve cruel experiments on animals, "Beauty without cruelty". If the T.O.S. can tell us where there is a special need, then its members can make donations for the T.O.S. to distribute, and can also suggest other ways in which they can help.

But an information centre such as this needs a certain amount of money for postage and office expenses. Each Section organizes its own branch of the T.O.S. How are these expenses usually met? In some Sections members of the T.O.S. pay a small annual subscription to cover such expenses. Is this the general rule?

It is hoped that we may have a meeting during the German Summer School in Bad Homburg vor der Höhe, August 7 to 14. Let us have information then and suggestions for the future organization and activity of the T.O.S.

What about a fund for helping young members to attend study meetings and Summer Schools in other Sections?

Hoping to meet many of you during the coming Summer.

MADELEINE LESLIE-SMITH

Book Reviews

THE PATH OF HEALING

By H. K. CHALLONER, T.P.H.,
London, £2.20.

This is the second edition, containing a long introduction, and other enlargements and improvements. It is much more than a treatise on healing physical ailments, and contains detailed suggestions for the transformation of character which our President so often stresses. There is extensive variety of practical instruction on many sides of our emotional and mental lives, such as the proper use of fear and its transmutation.

... Love is the only power that can redeem and transform evil into good, ignorance into wisdom and disease into health. The writer shows how nothing so hinders this as criticism and denigration of others.

As the whole book is replete with suggestions of how to transform darkness into the Light which will bring man to a future of conscious co-operation with the Creative Hierarchies, there is a great deal in it from which every student will benefit.

THE PRINCIPLES OF ASTROLOGY

By CHARLES E. O. CARTER
Quest Book, T.P.H. £1.20.

Charles E. O. Carter may be looked upon as the father of modern astrology. His well known title *The Principles of Astrology* has now been issued in the Quest series of quality paper-backs. Unlike many beginners' books, Carter's approach is from a deep spiritual insight into the subject. Undoubtedly it will find a place on the bookshelf of student and advanced astrologer alike.

F.M.M.

In Perspective

A Better United Nations

No one can question the value of many of the subsidiary activities of the United Nations. An immense amount has been done for the welfare and succour of people and peoples on a world scale in education, health, food, culture etc. This alone has justified its formation and continued existence. However, other parts of the record are not so good. Some major aims of the Organization were set out in the superb document called the Declaration of Human Rights, which was passed *nem con* by the General Assembly in 1948. But only a small percentage of states has ratified the Covenants embodying these rights. Again, the political influence of the United Nations has for long been negligible, and this is a sphere in which great hopes were placed at its formation.

What is the cause of this failure? It lies partly with nations who are lukewarm as regards world welfare but wax hot in pursuit of national self-interest. This is not only to be expected at this stage of human evolution. The remarkable thing is not that the U.N. is in many ways ineffective, but that the idea of international co-operation should have so penetrated the thought of the world as to produce a physical organization at all.

There is, however, a more fundamental difficulty in the Organization, deriving from the way in which it was formed. It had certain advantages, as successor to the League of Nations, in noting the experiences of that body; but it was established by nations that had apparently won a world war in the hope of ensuring their security without fighting or vast armaments. There was much idealism as well as what is euphemistically called enlightened self-interest. Many other nations joined the club in due course, and often baited older members. But the ideals had dissipated. Debating international politics with an eye to pleasing one's nationals at home is hardly likely to be either constructive or useful. Some day surely the nations must form a parliament of some kind, not for prestige, or showing off, or selfish advantage, not even for keeping their end up, but because they want to co-operate for the benefit of mankind. Then we shall have a real United Nations and an effective world organization.

One Man's Belief

The following extract from a broadcast by Mr. Sean O'Faolain may be worth pondering. 'I have no least speck of local patriotism left in me. I believe only that the dignity of man should never be diminished anywhere—in India, Johannesburg, Salisbury, Belfast, Mexico, Venezuela, Hungary, Czechoslovakia or Great Britain. I don't give a tinker's curse who rules any of these places so long as every man there is given parity of social, economic and cultural opportunity to be himself, and, at that, without interfering with the right of the man at his side to be himself in a completely opposite way.'

L.H.L.S.

(Continued from column 3)

comprehensive list of notes on the words and phrases used. This is fascinating reading and will profit all students of Buddhism, especially as practised in Tibet.

R. N. BHASKAR.

FAIRIES AT WORK AND AT PLAY

OBSERVED BY GEOFFREY HODSON, T.P.H.,
London, £0.75.

This is the fourth reprint of a book first published in 1925. It is not illustrated, but the descriptions are so vivid that no pictures are needed. The non-physical beings were observed by Mr. Hodson between 1921 and 1924 in Switzerland, England, Wales and the Isle of Man. The wide range of places and subjects of observation give great interest to the reader. Some of the beings described had beauty or charm and most were part of the energy system and creative process of our world. Other sightings were however less pleasant, being either the agents of vast and even terrifying force, as in the description of a great thunderstorm, or were the slowly disintegrating remnants of elementals produced by evil and black magical practices.

(Continued on column 4)

Ruysbroeck the Admirable

Extracts from a Talk by M. Pearson-Laroute

Born in 1293 Jean Ruysbroeck spent his early childhood in the hamlet of that name in a forest, where he became deeply devoted to the trees and to all nature. This love he retained throughout his life. It gradually developed into a truly cosmic understanding, to be added to his mystical experience. When he was about 10 he went to Sainte Gudule where his uncle was canon. There he studied, it seems with some difficulty, and was ordained priest. He was not clever, was careless about his appearance, and nothing would have been heard of him if it had not been for an unusual woman.

Known by the name of Bloemardinne, she was the daughter of an alderman of Brussels and belonged to a sect called the Porretists. Precise details are not known about it, but it was based on a lively and confused mixture of some of the ideas of the Cathars of France and of the Neo-Platonists of the Rhineland, superimposed on a local knowledge of sorcery which had come down from pagan times. All this added up to a form of pantheistic materialism. Bloemardinne had acquired an enormous reputation and became a legendary figure even in her lifetime. She prophesied, she lectured from a magnificent silver throne and had a great following, as her teaching was simple. It was only necessary to reject everything—dogma, the sacraments, one's duties etc.—in order to attain to an indifference which was complete emptiness. This was blessedness and one had become one of God's elect. If one should happen to have a vision one was a messenger or true representative of God. Everything one did henceforth was perfect, and subsequent sins of the flesh were explained away with seraphic and high-flown rhetoric. She was rich and generous. The crowds flocked to her and followed her teaching. What was worse, the clergy had come under her influence.

Although Ruysbroeck was only a humble priest, so lacking in eloquence that a sermon was a penance for him, he saw more clearly than the others. He decided to refute these heresies and to enter into conflict with Bloemardinne, who counted among her followers highly placed persons in society, including the Duchess of Brabant, to whom her silver throne was given as a relic on her death in 1335.

Ruysbroeck was as unpopular with the crowd as he was in influential circles. Since he was no speaker, he wrote. He realised that if such large crowds adhered to the sects, it was because people, to use his expression, wanted to 'live God'. He thought that although this movement had deviated there was a sound basis on which to build. As H. P. Blavatsky said: If one wants to lighten the darkness, one does not take a stick to beat it, one brings in a lamp. This is what Ruysbroeck did.

He knew that true spiritual life only begins where the false mystics believe they have achieved it. In *Light on the Path* and *The Voice of the Silence* there is ample confirmation of this. He set out to give people a precise idea of the truly spiritual life. He divided the path as follows:

- First stage, active life: purification, prayer, perfection;
- Second stage, interior life: purification, illumination, perfection;
- Third stage, contemplative life: purification, illumination, contemplation.

Only at the end of the three stages does one experience union with God. His detailed description of 'God without form' reminds us of Parabrahm the Unmanifest. 'The union in which the soul is with God in the joy, one bliss, without distinction... does not prevent it from being quite distinct, for otherwise the creature would become God, which is impossible'. We remember *Light on the Path* where we read: 'You will enter the light, but you will never touch the Flame' and 'Desire only that which is beyond you'.

Maeterlinck, who translated his works, pointed out that although alone and in poverty he was able to reflect all the pinnacles of human thought. Without any access to such knowledge, he knew the Platonism of Greece, the Sufism of Persia, the Brahmanism of India and the Buddhism of Tibet. These essential doctrines he reiterated in nearly all his books, as will be seen from the following passage:

'Our life is from God and from a higher spirit which participates in His eternity. The eternal existence which we have in God constitutes a distinct entity owing to its production in time. At the same time this entity is so akin to God that God recognizes and reflects Himself in this resemblance, although there is distinction and difference. This resemblance is nevertheless one with the image of the Holy Trinity. By this image our being, created in time, is suspended at the heart of the Eternal Being and is one with Him in his essential existence. By it God lives in us, His existence shines in the pinnacle of the soul which is like a mirror in which it is reflected, and it is that which is the Spirit'.

What exactly does his word 'image' mean for him? He says: 'It is an aptitude, innate and constitutional in the human body, to imitate, according to the trinitary rhythm, the internal activity of God, from which it derives'. He also says: 'What we are we contemplate (in contemplation), and what we contemplate we are'.

He considered that the essential faculties of the soul (which he called the powers) are created by human activity. We find the same idea in Patanjali and other Indian philosophies. In describing the activity and the essence of the soul suspended in God, he says: 'In this unity, the soul is called spirit'. (Could it not also be translated as the Self?)

In describing the natural unity, we are on the familiar ground of the monad, the ego and the personality, a trinity yet one. In *Esoteric Buddhism* there is a chapter entitled 'The Progress of Humanity' in which this question is dealt with in exactly the same way, almost in the same words, although it is certain that Ruysbroeck did not know Sinnett!

Had he read all this somewhere or was he trying to convey his own experience? We do not know. He says: 'One must see...' and again: 'To hear and to see are one and the same thing. If you cannot see you cannot hear, and if you cannot hear, you cannot see'. This is also said in our theosophical books, but it has nothing to do with psychism, of which he was ignorant. He penetrated to the purest and most complete spiritual vision, which he accepted without hesitation, feeling that this was Truth itself, and one can have no doubts when faced with Truth.

We ask ourselves what is this union without intermediary, that of the third stage, of contemplation, if the glorious spiritual body only shows the perfection of the first stage? How many of us would be happy if we had only arrived at the perfection of the first stage, which is only the antichamber of the second, which is only the antichamber of the third. At what height can we find the real door to the spiritual life, the life immersed in God?

Here Ruysbroeck says: 'When the soul has arrived at this stage, it can go out, as it goes to meet the bridegroom'. The order addressed to the virgins according to Matthew XXV, 6, is: 'Behold the bridegroom comes, go ye out to meet him'.

There are four different ways of going out, but Ruysbroeck did not explain what he meant by this expression.

- (1) Go to join God and the saints;
- (2) Go to the sinners and pervers, to convert them;
- (3) Go to purgatory and free the souls there;
- (4) Go to mankind and all the just ones, to teach and to serve them.

In *The Voice of the Silence* we find the Nirmanakaya, the Dharmakaya, the Sambhogakaya and the Shangna robe, in other words the four paths indicated by Ruysbroeck corresponding in substance first to absorption in God by leaving the world to live in eternal bliss; and the three other paths chosen by the Buddha.

A final word about Ruysbroeck's love of nature. Like St. John of the Cross his love extended to the animals, the plants, the elements, cosmology, even the astrology of his day, in which he found symbols of love and wisdom. Amongst many other details he compared the sun with Christ, and the signs of the zodiac with stages in the spiritual life. For him, nature and man were not two things apart. He wrote:

(Continued on column 3)

The Wandering Minstrels

By GRETA EEDLE

'The way was long, the wind was cold, The minstrel was infirm and old; His withered cheek and tresses grey Seemed to have known a better day; The harp, his sole remaining joy, Was carried by an orphan boy.'

Out of my memory arose these opening lines of Scott's poem, learned in childhood, as I gazed on the isolated eccentric figures standing or sitting at intervals at the approach to a great motorway, their thumbs jerking in the outward direction, whilst coaches, lorries and private cars thundered past as fast as the law would allow.

What will these wandering minstrels look like in 30, 40 or 50 years' time? Some of them have slightly withered cheeks already and most of their clothes, especially their fur coats, have certainly known a better day. The guitar, the modern harp, is carried by themselves, no orphan boys being around, although one does occasionally see the luggage problem solved by the minstrel carrying just his guitar whilst a useful girl friend shoulders the heavy packs. They wander from place to place, sometimes of their own choosing, sometimes to the destination of the motorist who gives them a lift, unlike the minstrels of the Middle Ages who went from Castle to Castle or from Fair to Fair, on their own two feet or with the help of a donkey or horse.

The minstrels of old are not to be confused with the troubadours, who were comfortably situated, leisured and well educated, wrote poetry and music of high quality and may be considered the fathers and mothers of European literature and music.

I have heard that one of the reincarnation cycles is 6/700 years, so the wanderer of the 13th century may well have drifted back into the 20th. The types are very similar. The minstrels wandered from place to place, singing of love and heroism, performing juggling and acrobatic feats, and bringing colour and amusement to the settled people. They somehow scraped a livelihood, lived a hard life and died fairly young. To some extent they must have lived off the land and were therefore considered thieves. They must have been dirty and insect-ridden and were therefore expected to sleep rough. In many places they were driven away. Did some of them die in fear and hatred of the establishment of the day? Very likely, for some tyrannies were very cruel.

Many of the modern minstrels despise the free societies into which they were born, and accuse their organisations of being hypocritical, tyrannical and many other nasty things. These societies have, however, provided them with families who often keep them, schools and colleges which could give them every kind of free education they might want, and medical care, sports and recreational facilities of every kind. Do they want these privileges, for which the children in the undernourished, under-educated 'third world' would give almost anything?

Obviously not, for if one suffers from an inward urge that drives one over hill and dale, not cheerfully on foot as in the days of my youth, but in vehicles belonging to upholders of the established society along motorways polluted with traffic fumes, one appears to be in search of a happiness that forever eludes one in the manner of the German poet who sang: 'Dort wo Du nicht bist, dort ist das Glück'. (Happiness is only to be found elsewhere.)

Can one achieve happiness, or experience that quality of love which expresses itself in self-abnegation and service to one's fellow human beings, and alone can change the quality of life around one, whilst one

(Continued from column 2)

'Nature is a way designed, willed and embellished by God, a guide for us, an example to understand and on which to meditate. It is a living proof of the future of the soul which seeks God through the spring, the sunrise, the zodiac, the constellations, the flowers, the insects'.

No essay as short as this can possibly do justice to the whole of the magnificent teaching of this 13th/14th century theosophist. He needs to be studied in depth.

is mainly occupied in passive resistance against regular habits, soap and water, and the prevalent notion that a positive contribution of a useful nature should be made to society? I have no idea.

It is not as though most of the wandering minstrels had any specific and all-embracing programme as has, for instance, the Mouvement des Jeunes Revolutionnaires in France, which paints on walls that it wants to get rid of technocrats, banks, the Soviets and President Nixon. No, the minstrels are far more vague. They are against the establishment which has nurtured them, keeps them alive and moving. Their music is morose and monotonous compared with that of previous generations, but not compared with the music of the Middle Ages, which was feeling its way along the simplest of lines.

May we consider the hypothesis that the wandering minstrels are reincarnations of those of the Middle Ages? If so, we can understand their seeming lack of musical talent compared with the average young European, their lack of attachment to family, custom and country. If they were among those who were persecuted and cruelly treated, one can even begin to understand their assumption that the world owes them a living. One can also appreciate that they may have had no particular egoic friends to whom they were attracted in reincarnation, and that they therefore have no sympathetic ties with their parents and siblings, also that they appear in different countries showing similar characteristics.

However, we all know that the world does not see it this way. In fact, one cannot help feeling anxious on their behalf. In every generation the middle-aged and elderly patiently help the young eccentrics and parasites of their day as long as they can. Their contemporaries show no such tolerance and certainly give no help when they in turn become middle-aged. But when the young become old they are faced with a new generation of youth who have no intention of understanding, let alone of helping them. So one can assume that when our modern minstrels have become infirm and old they will indeed find the way long and the wind cold.

This may be just a pessimistic view. Perhaps the present generation of wandering minstrels will yet make a worth-while contribution to the world, but of this there are so far no signs.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS

Please will you pay your subscription of £0.50 or U.S.\$1.20 per annum to Theosophy in Action, Business Management, 50 Gloucester Place, London W.1 or to your agent, if listed below.

In order to economise on postage receipts can only be sent if especially requested and if 2½p is added to the subscription. If you wish to receive your copies by air, please add the amount necessary for extra postage.

AGENTS

AUSTRALIA: Mrs. Betty Stoltenhoff, The Theosophical Society, 25 Bligh Street, Sydney, N.S.W.

DENMARK: Mrs. B. Bonde Jensen, 31 Skanderborgvej, 3rd floor, 8000 Aarhus C.

FINLAND: Miss Sirkka Kivilianna, Vesakkotie 2 C 26, Helsinki 28.

FRANCE: Madame H. Sabatay, 52 bis rue Jacques Dulud, 93 Neuilly-sur-Seine.

GERMANY: Frau Meyer - Dohm, Askulapweg 1, 463 Bochum-Querenburg.

ICELAND: Sveinn F. Rognvaldsson, Njalsgotu 108, Reykjavik.

INDIA: Dr. A. Kannon, The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras 20.

IRAN: Dr. M. Homayouni, P.O. Box 1126, Teheran.

NETHERLANDS: Mrs. B. L. M. Cardinaal de Leet de Kanter, Kampsingel 56, Zevenaar.

NEW ZEALAND: Mr. Phil Scott, 50 Vigor Brown, Napier, Hawkes Bay.

SOUTH AFRICA: Mrs. Mitford Barber, Castleton, Orange Street, Hout Bay.

SWITZERLAND: Madame Streiff, Hauensteinstr. 128, 4059 Basle.

U.S.A.: Mrs. Margery Dawn, 756 Santa Ana Blvd., Oak View, California 94022.

Some Thoughts on the Harmonising of the Opposites

By M. ANDERSON

We live in a world of duality, a duality which is expressed outwardly in the opposite phenomena of light and darkness, heat and cold etc. Inwardly in man there is psychological duality expressed in the opposite states of joy and sorrow, love and hate etc. Socially we observe (and play our part in) the duality of wealth and poverty, politically that of "right" and "left".

We live not only in a world of duality, but also in one of what Madame Blavatsky called "periodicity", a continuous motion from one opposite to the other and back again: "An alternation such as that of Day and Night, Life and Death, Sleeping and Waking, is a fact so perfectly universal and without exception that it is easy to comprehend that in it we see one of the absolutely fundamental Laws of the Universe".*

Nature is always in motion. Time, in which we live, can be seen as a state of motion. Being in motion, Nature, including man, can be seen to be situated most of the time not at one of two possible extreme ends but somewhere in between, nearer to the one or the other of two opposites. In other words, nothing is absolutely cold or absolutely hot, but simply more or less cold or hot.

So also man does not know absolute joy (or sorrow) but only relative joy (or sorrow), a state nearer or less near to an abstract absolute joy (or sorrow). Political parties are relative in the extent of their adhesion to the left or the right.

So what we call opposites are really only tendencies towards one or another extreme. They are only relative opposites.

Everywhere in Nature man is confronted with these (relative) opposites and they present him with various problems. At its simplest, there is e.g. the problem of keeping warm in the cold and keeping cool in the heat and of protecting plants and animals against such extremes. But the opposites and the play between them are seen to be useful and helpful, for they strengthen plants, animals and man and make them more resistant and at the same time adaptable.

What causes man most suffering and most problems is the pull of the opposites on himself and others and the play between them in the psychological and in the social field, especially when he identifies himself with them.

Everyone has at some time experienced inner conflict, perhaps between duty and desire, or between two desires, or two duties! Sometimes joy and agony or love and hate alternate so rapidly that they seem to be one feeling. Yet when such an experience has died away we realise that we have been somehow strengthened by it and that our understanding has deepened. So the sometimes painful friction between opposites can be beneficial and indeed necessary. We have become more resistant and more adaptable.

We experience the play of opposites not only within ourselves but also in relation with others. The conflict of opinions can be something very painful—above all since we usually identify ourselves with our own opinion! If we are trying to be objective, we shall attempt to understand the other man's point of view, listen to his arguments, reflect on his character and circumstances and other reasons which led him to the opinions he holds, remembering that both he and we are expressions of the same Life, that he has a perfect right to his opinion and that we ourselves, given other circumstances, might well have held just that opinion. We must of course guard against changing our opinions periodically to fit in with those of the last person whom we have met! It is a matter of avoiding the two extremes of intolerance and liability.

If we try to understand others and be impersonal, we sometimes find ourselves in the uncomfortable position of being expected by each side in a violent argument or a feud to support its point of view or perhaps to arbitrate. This is a very difficult situation, for we mostly lack the wisdom to find a solution which might reconcile the parties—and we finish up, more often than not, by antagonising both of them! With time we shall perhaps learn the necessary tact and wisdom to help in such a situation.

Disputes are however often very fruitful. There are some illuminating remarks in

the "Mahatma Letters" concerning the London Lodge of the T.S., which was then split into two factions. The greatest danger for the Lodge was said to be not the friction between the two points of view but lethargy if these opposite standpoints had not existed.

But when the friction between opposites leads in the social and international fields to open conflict and even war (in Northern Ireland, in Vietnam), it is not very helpful to reflect that friction can be beneficial. What may be beneficial in a limited amount is highly harmful in a larger dose. The two extremes of lethargy and armed conflict are both undesirable.

In such a case as war we realise the urgent need for humanity to arrive at a harmonising of the opposites. It is not a matter of dispensing with the opposites, which would not in any case be possible, but of somehow building a bridge of understanding—and standing on the bridge when one can.

There are several possibilities. In business the representatives of two companies wishing to conclude an agreement discuss and arrive at such an agreement by a process of mutual concessions, a process of compromise, so that they meet somewhere in the middle between any extreme positions they may at first have held. In international politics the same procedure is adopted between heads or representatives of different states. Here much more is at stake but for several reasons it is often more difficult to arrive at a settlement. But the very fact that individuals meet and discuss, trying to come to agreement, may create an atmosphere which makes later negotiations easier.

So the opposites may be harmonised by compromise. They may also be harmonised by the introduction of a third factor. It may be a "negative" third factor, when the parties are reconciled and united by a common danger. We have ample illustration of this in politics today. Faced with the existence of the atomic bomb, practically every nation in the world outwardly proclaims itself in favour of peace.

But the opposites may be harmonised by a "positive" third factor. This can most easily be illustrated from e.g. philosophy. Thesis and antithesis are resolved in a synthesis which transcends them. Speaking of the extreme views in theology in support of Grace and Self-Reliant Effort, Dr. Taimni writes: "The truth underlying both these extreme views transcends both the views and reconciles them in a deeper perception of the spiritual facts of existence. This paradox is really a 'dvandva' or pair of opposites which the intellect poses for us owing to our limited vision. It can be completely resolved only when the intellect is transcended and we are able to perceive that reality from which the 'dvandva' is derived by a process of polarization."***

Such a reconciliation of two extreme views is becoming possible, e.g. in the field of religion. More is achieved today by ecumenical efforts than would have been thought possible even 20 years ago.

If such reconciliation is seen to be possible in conflicts of philosophical opinion, we may hope that the time will come when it is possible also in the realm of international relations.

It is not a matter of destroying the opposites or even of belittling them. They exist, they are part of life, they are our world, they should be recognised and appreciated, even enjoyed. At the same time, their potential harmfulness when man identifies himself with one of them and carries it to excess should be guarded against. The first step which we might take would be to try, as individuals, to avoid identifying ourselves with any opposite, any extreme view (which simply means to avoid fanaticism). Let us, when it is possible for us, realise that in our real nature we are nearer to the point of synthesis and transcendence. This should not hinder us from working with the opposites (i.e. from being outwardly active), at the same time not taking them—or ourselves—too seriously.

*The Secret Doctrine, Proem, p.82, Vol. 1, 5th (Adyar) Edition.

***The Paradox of Grace and Self-Reliant Effort". The Theosophist, December 1971.

RESULT OF MEYER COMPETITION ORGANIZED BY THE SWISS SECTION

As announced in our issue of September 1969 an international competition was organized inviting members, groups of research workers, etc. to present unpublished texts on Theosophy and its relationship to other aspects of life. This competition has now been judged and the following prizes awarded:

1st: *Fragments of Hindu Occultism*. The winner lives in India and is awarded a return air ticket from New Delhi to Europe, and a stay of three weeks in Huizen.

1st: *Essai d'une philosophie de la musique*. The winner is Belgian and is awarded a return air ticket from Europe to Madras and a stay of three weeks at our International Headquarters in Adyar.

2nd: *Hommage à un Père*. The winner is Dutch and is awarded three weeks accommodation at Huizen, and free travel and accommodation at a European summer school.

3rd: *Aquarian Occultist*. The winner is American and is awarded a return flight from Baltimore to Wheaton and a contribution towards the expenses of attending a study week of the American Convention.

4th: *La Genesi dell'Anima*. The winner is Italian, and is offered a return ticket first class from his home to the Pays Latins Summer School at Territet, with free accommodation.

5th: *Lesebuch für alle Tage*. Collective work of a German Lodge. Token of Sw.Frs.500—for the purchase of books or other objects.

6th: *Coup d'oeil sur la vie*. The winner is French, and is awarded a token for Fr.Frs.500—for the purchase of books from the Editions Adyar, Paris.

7th: *Die liebenswerte Bestie*. The winner is Austrian, and is awarded a return 1st class ticket to Pichl and accommodation for one week at the German-speaking region summer school or a token for Sw.Frs.250—for the purchase of books.

NEWS FROM ADYAR

The NEW LIFE FOR INDIA Movement was started in 1968 on the initiative of Mrs. Radha S. Burnier, the General Secretary of the Indian Section of the T.S. It was formally inaugurated by the then Governor of Tamil Nadu, Sirdar Ujjal Singh, in October, 1968. It stands for right citizenship, which connotes all efforts to fulfil one's duties as a citizen, based on regard for social and public welfare, overriding personal, group and sectarian interests. The Movement asks its supporters and the public to stand by moral values and live by them. It also emphasizes the importance of the adoption of only right means for the achievement of right ends. It is non-partisan. Its aim is to improve the moral atmosphere and to help free public life from indiscipline, corruption, inefficiency and disregard of moral values.

During the 96th International Convention of the T.S. held at Adyar in December 1971, workers and supporters of the Movement from many parts of India met. They decided to hold seminars, camps, essay and speakers' contests and to popularise the objects of the movement through the mass media of meetings, newspapers, radio, etc. The meeting commended to its workers the formation of centres of the movement in colleges and other institutions. Workers were also asked to go into rural areas and carry on the work of educating the public on civic sense.

SCHOOL OF THE WISDOM, ADYAR, 1972

This will cover a period of five months from 16th October to 16th March 1973, with a break for the International Convention. Mr. Geoffrey Hodson will be the Director of Studies.

Students must be members of the Society and have some knowledge of Theosophy. They should preferably be individuals who have contributed to the work of the Society. All applications for admission must be accompanied by a letter of recommendation from the General Secretary. Applications should be made to The Recording Secretary, Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras 20, India.

SUMMER SCHOOLS

Finnish Section: 24th June to 2nd July.
Swedish Section: 1st to 8th July (Stensund).

Danish Section: 22nd to 29th July (Gammel Praestegaard).

English Speaking Region: see below.
German Section: 7th to 14th August see below.

Pays Latins Region: 19th to 26th August (Territet, Switzerland).

German-speaking Region: September (Pichl, Austria).

"Theosophical Rendez-vous" in Jersey: 16th to 23rd September.

Mrs. Radha Burnier, General Secretary of the Indian Section, will be the Guest of Honour at the first five of the above summer schools.

Mr. and Mrs. Geoffrey Hodson will be at the Centre in Huizen, Holland, during July, August and September, and will hold a study course during that period.

GERMAN SUMMER SCHOOL

The annual Council Meeting of the Society in Europe will take place during the week. Please register with Miss Ilse Heynen, Hofweg 21, D-2000 Hamburg 76, and for accommodation write direct to: Verkehrsammt der Kurverwaltung, D-638 Bad Homburg vorder Höhe.

ENGLISH SPEAKING REGION SUMMER SCHOOL

High Leigh, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire.
29 July-5 August 1972

Theme: TO KNOW FOR ONESELF

Members from other Sections will be warmly welcomed at this Summer School. The Guest Speaker is Mrs. Radha Burnier and with Mrs. Madeleine Leslie-Smith, Chairman of the European Federation presiding. Other speakers will include Miss Joy Mills, National President of America, Dr. Corona Trew, Dr. Hugh Shearman, Mr. Geoffrey Farthing, Miss Ianthe Hoskins, Mr. L. H. Leslie-Smith and Mr. V. Wallace Slater.

The charge for the whole week is £16 including all meals, morning coffee and evening drink, plus a non-refundable Registration Fee of 50p. A special coach is being arranged to leave Portland Place, London, (Opposite the B.B.C.) on Saturday, July 29 at 3 p.m. to take members direct to High Leigh at a cost of 50p each.

Applications, with the Registration Fee of 50p, should be sent to Mrs. Doris M. Slater, 10 Cranmer Court, Wickliffe Avenue, London, N3 3HG.

THE THEOSOPHICAL WORLD TRUST FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH has issued a new leaflet about its work. Will those interested please apply to Mrs. Doris Slater, 10 Cranmer Court, Wickliffe Avenue, London, N3 3HG, with a stamped addressed envelope, (or international postage coupon).

(Continued from page 1, column 2)
heavy karma of the world'. Each of us bears a torch to show the path to Happiness for others.

A time will come, though you and I will see it only in our next incarnation, when the curses called competition and the struggle for life, which dog the footsteps of mankind today, will have been as evil dreams of the night. You and I are working to create that new day's light and that happiness for all, when there shall be no distinction, of race, creed, sex, caste or colour; when men and women know and rejoice in the only supreme fact of their immortal life as souls, as gravity is the supreme fact of their earthly bodies, that Happiness is within themselves, that the Way to Salvation starts from their own hearts, and that they need no temple or priest or book to show them the road. For they will have discovered that the Way, the Truth, the Life and the Joy are inseparable from the essential nature of every man, woman and child.

My Brothers, we shall succeed in our stupendous task. We shall achieve our dream. For we work, but not alone. With us stand the Great Saviours of the World who have gone before us. Their Blessing is with us; Their Strength will uphold us, as in Their name and for the love of mankind, we go forth into the world to lessen the load of human misery.

Printed in Great Britain by F. J. PARSONS LTD., London, Folkestone and Hastings.